

CITY OF MIAMI BEACH
Office of the City Manager
Letter to Commission No. 050-2004



To: Mayor David Dermer and
Members of the City Commission

Date: February 23, 2004

From: Jorge M. Gonzalez
City Manager

A handwritten signature of Jorge M. Gonzalez in black ink.

Subject: COPS IN SHOPS PROGRAM

This Letter to the Commission is to provide information on the **COPS IN SHOPS** Program. This program targets underage drinking by building a partnership with local businesses that sell alcoholic beverages. In the **COPS IN SHOPS** Program, an undercover police officer would periodically be behind the sales counter of businesses selling alcoholic beverages. The undercover officer would be present to identify underage persons when they would try to purchase alcoholic beverages illegally. The officer would then take the appropriate legal steps should the underage person try to violate the law by purchasing the alcoholic beverage. By placing "cops in shops," the hope is to instill in a fear of apprehension in those underage persons that purchase alcoholic beverages illegally and endanger their lives.

Since first learning of the program in June 2003, the Miami Beach Police Department's Strategic Investigations Unit has worked with the Legal Department to draft a Memorandum of Understanding for businesses participating in the program. In December of 2003, promotional material and paperwork for business partnerships were distributed to twelve businesses in Miami Beach. Presently, some Miami Beach businesses are already displaying the promotional material from this program. Already, underage drinkers are being put on notice that undercover police officers may be watching them. Further implementation of this program is dependent upon the businesses signing a Memorandum of Understanding with the MBPD.

Underage drinking has killed thousands yearly and is an epidemic that requires a program like **COPS IN SHOPS** to deter those that put themselves and others in danger. By building partnerships with the business community, the Miami Beach Police Department will have a positive impact on this issue.

JMG\DW\DWtr

C: Chief Donald W. De Lucca